

The FCC's recent order in FCC-03-273A1 to mandate the MPAA broadcast flag, in my opinion, is an assault on my fair use rights. It will also have unfortunate economic consequences. I refuse to purchase any HDTV equipment that complies with the broadcast flag. I believe a significant proportion of consumers feel likewise. This is definitely not the means to facilitate adoption of HDTV.

The historical record shows that piracy, although a significant problem to any individual firm's bottom line, is not a threat to the viability of the content industry as a whole. The content industry fought VCRs, but now VCRs are a significant source of profit. They fought DVDs, but now DVDs are a significant source of profit, no thanks to the cumbersome region copy protection scheme. Their advocacy of the broadcast flag is their attempt to squelch the digital recorder, but digital recorders have as much potential to be a future revenue stream as to be a means to infringe copyright. It is bad politics to protect current bad business practices; it would be better to force the content industry to adapt to future market realities. Witness the protection of the steel industry.